

ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT  
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LEBANON/U.S.  
EMBASSY ATTACK

JENNINGS: And now some news from overseas. Ever since the latest attack on the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, and largely because of phone calls made to news agencies, a lot of people have connected the violence to something called Islamic Jihad, or Holy War. There has never been any proof nor has there been any retaliation. Well, now the Reagan administration says the real culprit may be another group. Here's Dennis Trout at the State Department.

TROUT: The town of Balbek in Lebanon's Bakaa Valley, home to a group known as Hezbollah, or Party of God. Hezbollah first surfaced in American intelligence reports when its suicide squads were blamed for last year's attacks on the U.S. Marines, the French forces and the U.S. Embassy in Beirut. Its members are drawn from Lebanon's poor Shiite population, concentrated in west Beirut, south Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley. Hussein Masavi is the leader of the radical Shiite community in Balbek. Masavi, the head of a group called Islamic Amal, claims innocence in truck bombings against American installations, but applauds anti-American violence, even suicide attacks.

HUSSEIN MASAVI (voice of translator): For us, that is easier than smoking a cigarette if it comes while fighting for the cause of God.

TROUT: For the U.S., thinking they've found the groups responsible is one thing, finding enough evidence to make public accusations or to retaliate is quite another. Western intelligence agents have found it difficult to penetrate the tight-knit military cells of Hezbollah, a task complicated by the remote areas where it operates. Its members often are scattered among civilians, so retaliatory raids would almost certainly cause innocent casualties and provoke still more suicide attacks. Moreover, administration officials claimed today that the group has still more explosives from the supply used in the attack two weeks ago in east Beirut. Dennis Trout, NBC News, the State Department.

JENNINGS: When we come back, Britain's coal miners' strike and a mining town at war with itself.

*Peter Jennings reports  
on the difficulty of obtaining  
information on the U.S.  
Embassy attack in Lebanon.*